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# Re: Consultation on Proposals for Angling and Additional Bridle Routes at Bateswood Local Nature Reserve, Halmerend.

Local community groups have approached the Council to request additional recreational facilities in Bateswood Local Nature Reserve in Halmerend.

The requests involve allowing controlled angling on part of the large pool and an additional bridle route which loops around the pool and rejoins the existing bridle route.

The requests from the community are illustrated on the attached plans.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has resolved to consult with local residents, groups and organisations prior to making a decision on whether or not to agree the principle of allowing the additional activities to take place.

The council has publicised this consultation process in the local media and is also consulting ward members, local residents, community groups and organisations with an interest in the site.

We thought that you and/or your group may be interested in providing comments on the new ideas, put forward by local community groups:

- The principle of creating a new circular horse route around the pool linking to the existing bridle route.
- The principle of allowing controlled angling on a designated section of the pool.

#### Background

The current recreational use of the site includes activities such as small scale illicit angling, horse riding, both on and off the designated bridle route, walking, running, cycling, nature watching and dog walking.

The Council has received requests from angling and equestrian groups requesting the use of Bateswood for these recreational activities. A petition was presented by a local ward member on 31 October 2008, signed by 186 petitioners from the locality requesting that the Council consider the use of the pool at Bateswood for fishing.

# **Horse Route**

A feasibility study in relation to the potential to create an additional circular bridleway has been undertaken. It appears that it would be feasible to establish a circular route around the site, separated from the more sensitive nature conservation areas, subject to riders adhering to the routes provided.

Progression of this initiative would be subject to sourcing funding to implement the scheme and then, if funding is secured, further detailed consultation with residents and appropriate stakeholders would take place.

At this stage the principle of allowing additional bridle route provision in Bateswood Local Nature Reserve is the subject of this consultation.

### **Angling**

With regard to the request to allow angling on the site, it appears that it would be possible to accommodate angling on a controlled section of the pool to minimise the risk of potential conflict with the use of the remainder of the pool for nature conservation purposes. If such a scheme was to proceed, it would be desirable to provide accessible fishing platforms, linked to the previously constructed accessible footpath network, in order to accommodate the needs of disabled anglers.

A review of the Bateswood Local Nature Reserve Management Plan suggests that although angling can cause various problems for nature conservation, some limited use of the pool for angling could be acceptable subject to a robust agreement with anglers to control issues such as access, fish stocking and marginal habitat management. This could be achieved by leasing the angling rights to the pool to an angling club who would effectively manage and control fishing on the site.

If angling is to be progressed for Bateswood, it is considered appropriate to develop ethical fishing guidelines to govern the activity at this site, and other angling facilities controlled by the Borough Council. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that animal welfare issues are addressed in a manner consistent with available best practice. A separate consultation exercise is underway at present on the draft Ethical Fishing Guidelines and details of this can be found on the Council's website at (insert link) or by calling the Community Team on 01782 717717.

#### The Consultation

A draft masterplan and a questionnaire (which can be completed online), have been posted on the council's website:

# http://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/bateswoodInr

Alternatively you could request a paper copy of the questionnaire and masterplan by telephoning the councils main contact number which is **01782 742500**.

Or by emailing landscape@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

The closing date for comments is ............... 2011.

The outcome of this consultation will be reported to the Cabinet of the Council and will inform the decision on whether or not to progress with either or both proposals.

## **Further Information**

The previous Cabinet report upon which the decision to consult was made is available from the councils website. The Council publishes its minutes, decisions, agendas and documents on its website. The following file path can be used to access cabinet decisions:

<u>Home</u> > <u>Council & Democracy</u> > <u>How The Council Works</u> > <u>Cabinet</u> > Cabinet Decisions Cabinet decisions that are relevant to this project are:

September 2011. Resolution No 297/12
Cabinet 18 December 2002 Resolution No. 759/03
Cabinet Resolution No. 118
Cabinet 13 September 2006 Resolution No. 366/07

Paper copies are available on request.

I do hope that you will take the opportunity to participate in this consultation process and look forward to receiving your comments by ......2011.

Yours sincerely

# Jennet Hough Landscape Officer

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